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A

LAMENTATION

For the declining state of

CHRISTIANITY IN SCOTLAND;

And especially in the TOWN and SHIRE of A Y R, within
the last hundred and fifty Years; with a contrast between
the past and present Times.

By JAMES MAXWELL, Poet in PAISLEY.

To which is added, by a neuter Hand,

A BLOW AT THE ROOT,

Given by our ECCLESIASTIC JUDICATORIES; whereby the
CHURCH of SCOTLAND is almost overthrown.

Set forth in a Dialogue between the Complainers against,
and the Defenders of Dr. W. M'GILL, one of the
Ministers of A Y R.

P A I S L E Y:

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LAMENTATION, &c.

WHEN we look back on town of Ayr,
 And also on that spacious shire,
 Where famous men have been of old,
 As by their memoirs we are told,
 Which faithful men have handed down,
 And what by some is yet well known;
 What ministers and people too,
 Did here reside, and not a few.

Their suff'rings, and their faithful-
 ness,

Their noble characters express:
 With proofs that they were sent of God
 To spread his gospel-grace abroad;
 And how they did that task fulfil,
 According to their Master's will;
 The faithful records witness bear,
 And manifest the truth most clear.

The brave John Welch* was made the
man,

That Reformation here began,
Who was recall'd by grace divine,
And made illustriously to shine;
A glorious occidental star,
Whose rays extended very far:
Though he had been by Satan led,
A while in devious paths to tread:
Yet was he rescu'd from that path
By sov'reign grace, and fill'd with faith
So that he was the foremost man
That Reformation here began,
And blessed with such vast success
As words cannot in full express.

Here first he found the people rude,
Yet were they soon by grace subdu'd.
Tho' wild as bears, they soon became
Gentle and peaceful as a lamb.
Thus did the grace of God appear
Pow'rful, beyond expression here;
For sixteen years, or thereabout
Did he the pow'rs of Satan rout.

Yet God, to make his judgment
known,
That all his sov'reign rights might own

* He was son-in-law to the great John Knox.

Suffer'd the pow'rs of hell to rage,
 And war against his saints to wage.
 Then James the Sixth was Satan's tool,
 The cause of Christ to over-rule.
 And to suppress the truth at once,
 Good Mr. Welch was sent to France:
 But God was with him ev'ry where,
 And much success he gave him there—
 Did all his enemies confound,
 And smote them with a galling wound;
 The king, who first against him rag'd,
 At sight his anger was assuag'd—
 At last, releas'd from his exile
 Was brought into the British isle.
 Yet not permitted more was he,
 His native land again to see.

Like Moses who was forc'd to drop
 His mortal part on Pizgah's top,
 And wafted to the heav'nly shore,
 Where Canaan he'll desire no more.
 So this dear saint was call'd away
 To regions of eternal day *;
 Where he'll no more for Scotia long,
 Nor wish to leave th' angelic throng.

Prayer was here his chief delight,
 Continually both day and night,

* He died at London.

But praise will now be his employ,
Eternally without annoy.

This is their chief delight above,
Inflam'd with everlasting love.

He liv'd by faith, with love he burn'd,
Now faith is into vision turn'd;
But love shall there for ever glow,
Nor end nor intermission know !

Now in Ayr town two provosts were
To Mr. Welch friends most sincere :
Their names were Stewart and Ken-
nedy,

Men of profound integrity :
Most zealous for the righteous cause,
Obedient to their Maker's laws :

And many more within that town,
True faithful men of high renown :
Nor only in the town of Ayr,
But numbers more within the shire,
Of whom to give a full detail,
My paper, pen, and ink would fail.

I therefore must the work cut short,
Tho' many may be sorry for't ;

And only mention some few more,
Who faithful testimony bore ;

Brave champions in the days of yore. }

Namely, great Peden, who was born
In Kyle, and parish of the Sorn.

He was a man of such renown
 For heav'nly gifts, as few were known,
 Since the apostles fell asleep,
 His heav'nly knowledge was so deep ;
 Save Mr. Welch and brave Cargill,
 All who were fraught with heav'nly
 skill,

These prophesied of things to come,
 Which were fulfill'd in total sum,
 Yea, of these three 'tis hard to say,
 Which was the greatest in their day.

John Brown, another Christian dear,
 A countryman of heart sincere ;
 Who was by bloody Clavers slain,
 And did the martyr's crown obtain.

One morning he was gone to work
 At peat-mofs, when that hellish Turk
 Came round him, with his fierce hell-
 hounds,

When not expected near the bounds.
 They took their aim with no small pains,
 And with fix shots blew out his brains ;
 For all were pointed at his head,
 No wonder then they kill'd him dead,
 His wife and infant too were near,
 Whose maiden name was Marrion Weir.
 She was a faithful Christian too,
 Such as was parallel'd by few.

With care she gather'd up his brains
Into her apron, with great pains.

The tyrant said, What think you
now,

Of your John Brown you lov'd so true?

Indeed, said she, I lov'd him dearly,
And love him still no less sincerely,
Nor less than e'er I did before,
Tho' cruelly you've shed his gore.

This said she, while with grief and
pains,

She yet was gathering up his brains.

Says he, you too deserve to die,
And with your husband there to lie.—
I doubt not your good-will, said she,
If God permitted that to be;
But devils can no further go,
Than they are suffer'd here below;
But how you'll answer this, said she,
To God or man, consider ye.

Said he, of man I have command,
And God I'll take in mine own hand.
Then mounted he upon his horse,
And off he rode without remorse.

John Stev'nson too, an Ayr-shire man,
Another of the faithful clan;
He was a Christian most sincere,
And he was hunted far and near:

But all their searchings were in vain,
 They never could their end obtain.
 Peden and he escap'd the sword,
 And were preserved by the Lord.

Nor only these, but numbers more,
 Were also hunted long and fore.
 And many cruelly were slain,
 Others escap'd with grief and pain,
 All these within the shire of AYR,
 As faithful histories declare :
 Besides what elsewhere also fell,
 By these emissaries of hell,
 To reckon up their numbers here,
 Would tire my reader's eye and ear.

But to return to AYR old town,
 Where many Christians of renown
 Liv'd in those days ; these we omit,
 Till time and place appear more fit.
 But ministers we know of none,
 After good Mr. Welch was gone,
 Till Charles the Second got the throne. }
 Then came the worthy good Adair,
 To be the minister of AYR,
 Until the Revolution, then
 AYR was supplied with faithful men,
 For many years to their content,
 By Heav'n's commission were they
 sent.

First, worthy Mr. Eckles came,
 A man of much deserved fame :
 And for his colleague, in his time,
 Came Mr. Hunter—most sublime !
 And when brave Eckles he was dead,
 Came Mr. Liston in his stead ;
 Who faithfully his place supplied ;
 But ah, how soon, alas, he died !

Then Mr. Veitch supplied his place,
 A man endu'd with heav'nly grace :
 But he continu'd here not long,
 Till call'd to join the heav'nly throng.

Good Mr. Fullerton came next,
 Whose days were also shortly fixt.
 And good M'Derment next took place,
 A man endu'd with special grace.
 Those five in Mr. Hunter's time,
 His colleagues were, all men sublime.

All these, and Mr. Hunter gone,
 Another sort of men came on ;
 To pull down all these built before,
 Which griev'd the hearts of many fore :
 The contrast is as dark as night,
 Compar'd with true meridian light !
 Namely, Dalrymple and M'Gill,
 Who many hearts with horror fill.
 And when the Lord in his great love,
 Will them from hence for us remove,

This is a secret yet unknown,
To any but the Lord alone.

Well may we at this present day,
With that old weeping prophet say*,
“ How is the gold now dim become,
And turned all to filthy scum !
Yea, ev’n the gold most pure and fine,
Which bore the stamp of truth divine,
Is chang’d now for noxious dross,
To our most woful shame and loss !”

O Lord ! wilt thou not yet restore
The precious gold we had before ?
Must we be cheated still with dross,
To our eternal shame and loss ?
Arise, O Lord, plead thine own cause,
And pluck the prey from Satan’s jaws !
Nor let these wolves our folds annoy,
And all our tender lambs destroy !

We tremble at the awful thought,
To what we’re likely to be brought !
We look to thee with longing eyes,
e: Will thou for our defence arise !
These specious lights, O Lord, expell,
That have but lately sprung from hell !
Send us again pure gospel light,
To guide our steps to thee aright.

* Jeremiah’s Lamentations.

And by this *Ignis Fatuus*' blaze,
 Let none be led to hell's dark maze :
 For many (we have cause to fear)
 Have to such lies inclin'd their ear :
 And many more, if left by thee,
 Will fatally deceived be.
 For our corrupted nature's choice
 Is to believe the serpent's voice.
 And listen like our mother Eve,
 Till us he finally deceive.

Exert thy sov'rain power, O Lord !
 Let many be by grace restor'd,
 Who have believ'd such hellish lies,
 As made them gospel truths despise.
 Pity their weakness who believ'd,
 Base crafty men, and were deceiv'd !
 Since now for gospel (as of old)
 We nought but errors black behold.
 Instead of Christ's redeeming grace
 Socinians all such truths deface.

Our great Redeemer they decry,
 And his divinity deny.
 They hold him but of human race,
 And all his sov'reign pow'r disgrace :
 His great atonement they despise,
 And call it base deceitful lies.

Yea, they assert, with brazen brow,
 That men are born as holy now

As Adam was, when first he stood
 Created by the hand of God ;
 And with the self-same pow'rs now
 stor'd,

As when he stood before the Lord.

The doctrine of the Trinity,
 By them accounted is a lie.
 The standards of the church have they
 Entirely laid aside this day.
 Those truths expell'd, what have we
 more ?

Our doleful state we must deplore.
 Now Satan thinks his prey is sure,
 When men are thus drawn to his lure.

But, Lord, in thee is all our trust,
 We know thy ways are right and just :
 We know false prophets were of old,
 As in thy word, lo, we are told ;
 And that they shall on earth remain
 Till thou, O Lord, return again,
 And many crafty tricks have they,
 Unstable mortals to betray.

Some truth with lies they always blend,
 Till they obtain their cursed end :
 So that if possible it were,
 Thy chosen ones they would ensnare.
 But they are kept by pow'r divine,
 To make free grace with glory shine.

Yet are they sometimes led a while
 Aside by such deceitful guile,
 Till thou illuminate their eyes,
 To see through all such false disguise:
 Yet shall not one of them be lost,
 For whom the Saviour paid the cost.
 This shall to Jesus' praise redound,
 And all his enemies confound.
 He will not lose on chosen sheep,
 That e'er was given him to keep.
 Yet may the tempter, much annoy
 Those whom he never can destroy.

On the deceitful, or sham Compromise of the SYNOD of
 GLASGOW and AYR, in the Cause of Dr. W.
 M'GILL, at AYR, April 14, 1790.

WHO could have thought that such a reverend band,
 Would have betray'd the church—deceiv'd the land?
 If Satan and M'Gill shall gain the day,
 Socinianism sure must bear the sway.

But will the Lord let earth and hell prevail,
 And let his people's expectations fail?
 No, sooner shall the course of nature stand,
 No more obey his holy just command;
 Ere he will let his promises deceive
 His faithful people, who in him believe.

Tho' thou, O Lord, who sov'reign art o'er all,
 Hast let thy church now get a shameful fall,
 Because her sons degen'rate are become,
 And have transgressors been ev'n from the womb,

Yet oft thou makest light from darkness spring,
And good from evil thou canst quickly bring.

Forgive, O Lord, the mock'ry that was made,
When for such victory the Synod pray'd,
And render'd thanks to thee when Zion fell;
And when prevail'd the subtle pow'rs of hell.
Great was their guilt, when they were so bereft
Of heav'nly grace, and to themselves thus left.
What! overthrow the kingdom of our Lord,
And then say, Peace was to the church restor'd!
Such mock'ry, and such gross hypocrisy,
Was sure most odious to thy jealous eye!
For this, O Lord, thy people humbly pray
That this foul stain may yet be wipt away!
If not we may expect some dreadful scourge,
Must yet go through this land thy church to purge!
What else can we expect but dreadful wrath,
To punish such perfidious breach of faith.

But this has been the way in ev'ry age,
The priest-hood did against the truth engage.
And is not this, O Lord, our present case?
Have they not brought thy church to foul disgrace?
Some preach the truth, thy people to deceive,
While they contrary to the same behave,
They chose three of a side away to go,
To plot how they thy church might overthrow!
These to a tavern went to drink and dine,
And to regale themselves with punch or wine—
Back they return, with pleasure and delight—
“ Now finish'd is the cheat, and all is right!
Now render thanks to him who hath permitted
The church to be by Satan's wiles out-witted!”

O gross hypocrisy! What can be worse,
Yet almost all agreed, without remorse!

What can we think of preachers such as these,
Who only strive hell's agents still to please?
Men they cajole, and simple souls they cheat;
But God abhors such falsehood and deceit!
Against such in his word, behold, he pleads,
And pours his vengeance on their guilty heads.

His church have they brought into fore distress,
 Left like a cottage in a wilderness.
 Yet are they harden'd like the adamant,
 They show no sign that they do yet repent.
 To all complaints they shut their eyes and ears,
 And not a token of remorse appears.

AN ELEGY on the much lamented Death of GOSPEL
 TRUTH, which was cruelly murdered by the Synod of
 GLASGOW and AYR, on the 14th of April, 1790, and
 again ratified by the General Assembly, at Edinburgh, on
 the 19th of May, 1791.

ALAS! alas! what doleful news I hear,
 From yonder west, with such a dreadful knell
 The din whereof hath almost stunn'd mine ear;
 Sure it was some great personage that fell!
 The gates of Zion trembled at the sound,
 And all her stately pillars seem'd to shake:
 So deep, so dismal was the horrid wound,
 It made her bravest sons with horror quake!
 What! is it murder? Yes, of deepest dye!
 Behold the Gospel Truth is basely slain!
 Hark, how the noise re-echoes from the sky,
 Lo, men have crucify'd our Lord again!
 Once was he crucify'd on Calvary,
 A sacrifice for all his chosen seed:
 Now crucified a fresh at AYR is he,
 See how his wounds begin again to bleed!
 Who were the perpetrators of this fact?
 Will none the cruel monsters apprehend?
 Can none the guilty murderers detect,
 And bring them to their just deserved end?
 'Twas Jewish priests that murder'd him of old,
 And elders of that black fraternity:
 By one of his disciples was he sold,
 To be condemn'd and hang'd on Calvary.

But now 'twas Christian priests and elders too,
 That thus have crucified our Lord again :
 Yea they their hellish principles to shew,
 Consented that he should a-fresh be slain !
 And now to palliate their guileful deed,
 They say the church's peace they thus restor'd :
 And so it seems they all at once agreed,
 To overthrow the kingdom of our Lord.
 And as the former murderers escapt
 The stroke of justice by man's feeble hand ;
 So these it seems are likely to be kept,
 Till they before Christ's judgment seat must stand.
 For when they were to have been strictly tried,
 At our high court for this atrocious deed :
 That shameless court their actions justified,
 And so were they from church's censure freed,
 Thus is the church of Scotland brought to shame,
 And all her glory blasted in one day !
 Her enemies against her now exclaim
 And say, She's harlot turn'd, and gone astray !
 How hard her case, 'mong all her stately sons,
 That none remains to take her by the hand ;
 But all agree to give her up at once,
 To just reproach thro' ev'ry foreign land !
 O tell it not in England, nor at Rome,
 Nor any nation whether far or near !
 Lest they exult, A harlot she's become,
 And all against her shout aloud and sneer !
 The very heathens may exult and say,
 She hath at last renounc'd the Christian name !
 Her boasted Saviour she hath cast away,
 And is become the world's reproach and shame.

EPISTLE. To my worthy friend and brother JOHN
 KNOX, author of the Remarks on the Proceedings of
 the Synod of GLASGOW and AYR, on the 14th of April
 1790, in the cause of Dr. M'GILL.

MY worthy friend and brother, good John Knox,
 M'Gill is sure more crafty than a fox
 For he the Synod all could cheat we see ;
 Yet God he could not cheat, nor you nor me.

For he hath learnt the Jesuitic art,
 And craftily hath he perform'd his part.
 By that same art hath he retain'd his place,
 In spite of all the fox-devouring chace.
 He knows the church's bread is large and sweet;
 And long hath he experienc'd that to eat.
 Tho' sacrilegiously by craft and fraud,
 For which his master may him much applaud.
 And he expects, we see, by short repentance,
 He may at last obtain a peaceful sentence.
 He can by flattery the church deceive,
 While they like simpletons his words believe.

Just at the nick of his entire exclusion,
 He struck them all into a wild confusion :
 And thus hath he found out an easy way
 To keep his place whatever they may say.
 He need not care whate'er they say or do,
 While he his wit so artfully can shew.
 Hereby can he securely keep his place,
 And none of them can put him to disgrace.
 Disgrace him ! No, he can disgrace them all,
 And none of them can him in question call !
 Nay, they are not so spitefully inclin'd,
 Against a brother of his dear lov'd kind.

Dissenters too may hold him for their friend,
 For he will thousands to their meetings send.
 And this will also please his brethren too,
 Hereby will they have little else to do,
 But eat and drink, and take their sluggish ease,
 And this their carnal appetites will please,
 While none can take from them their settled fees.
 None but the faithful sort of laity,
 Will thus be injur'd in the least degree.
 Only for those for whom Christ shed his blood,
 To reconcile them to their Father God ;
 None else (observe) need grieve for this event,
 But those for whom the Saviour's life was spent.
 These, only these, have cause hereat to grieve,
 That they are forced their mother church to leave,
 To seek the gospel where it may be found,
 Since only errors gross in her abound.

O dire event ! Would God it were not so,
That her own priests the church should overthrow !
But so it is, the tidings far are spread,
And ev'ry faithful soul those tidings dread !
But Deists and Socinians they rejoice,
And all who of religion make no choice.

Now, brother Knox, I thank you for your pains ;
Your little book much precious truth contains :
And ev'ry one should do whate'er they can,
To overthrow this Antichristian plan.
So till I hear from you, my friend, again,
Your brother dear, John Calvin, I remain.

A BLOW AT THE ROOT,

Given by our ECCLESIASTIC JUDICATORIES ; whereby the
CHURCH of SCOTLAND is almost overthrown. Set forth
in a Dialogue between the Complainers against, and the
Defenders of Dr. W. M'GILL.

Complainer's address to the General Assembly, in May 1791.

WE members of the church, o'erwhelm'd with grief,
To you apply in hopes to find relief.
We grieve to see our mother church profan'd,
And all her glory so with error stain'd.
We thought her bulwarks were so firm and strong,
They would secure her walls from ev'ry wrong ;
But now we find ev'n those within her walls
Are those who most her safety now appals.
She need not fear her enemies without,
If those within were faithful, firm, and stout.
But here, alas, her greatest danger lies,
From them who are her bosom enemies.
Nurs'd in her lap, and suckled at her breast,
From whom she might expect her danger least.
And those who should be watchmen in her fort,
Are those who most her enemies support.

We therefore would have those to justice brought,
 Who have so much her black confusion wrought.
 These her foundation strive to undermine,
 And rob her quite of ev'ry truth divine.
 Yea, these have caused her trouble and annoy,
 And strive her bulwarks wholly to destroy.

The foremost of this sort is this M'Gill,
 Who spreads his errors with such art and skill.
 His baits he covers with such fair disguise,
 Too few discover where their danger lies.
 And when they've swallow'd them they scarce believe,
 That such a man could ever them deceive.
 So he disseminates his crafty lies,
 Made up of most presumptuous blasphemies.

Why should such wolves destroy, and kill and slay,
 And eat the children's bread from day to day?
 The lower courts have most espous'd his cause,
 And strove t' evade our church's wholesome laws.
 We therefore hope this court supreme will hear,
 And to our kind assistance now appear.
 Nor only hear, but grant us full redress,
 From all our trouble and our deep distress.

General Assembly.

Forbear such whining cant! Would you pretend
 Such learned men as him to reprehend?
 'Tis not your business: therefore pray forbear,
 You're not to judge such men, but humbly hear,
 And follow their advice most rev'rently,
 Nor dare against your teachers to reply.
 Such frivolous complaints we will not hear,
 Nor to such wild contentions lend an ear.

Complainers.

If we must pin our faith on such men's sleeves,
 And take for truth what ev'ry upstart gives;
 We may as well believe the Pope of Rome,
 And never fear what may hereafter come.
 But we believe the word of God is true,
 And therefore must reject such notions new;
 For we believe that Jesus Christ our Lord,
 Hath all believers in his name restor'd,

By dying in their stead ; and thus hath he
 Them from the curses of the law set free.
 M'Gill asserts that we ourselves must save,
 If we aright in life ourselves behave ;
 And put no trust in Jesus Christ at all,
 He came not to redeem us from the fall ;
 But for a good example he was sent
 To shew our feet the way, and to repent.
 For he was but a man, and pow'r had none
 To save himself ; much less for us t' atone.

If this be right, what have we Bibles for ?
 We then may safely cast them out of door :

Now, if such just complaints you will not hear,
 Why should you in the church an office bear ?
 You are the men that ought to hear our cause,
 And grant redress according to our laws.

General Assembly.

Forbear such arrogance : for shame forbear ?
 Such false reproaches we disdain to hear.
 You are an ignorant contentious band,
 Who cannot scripture rightly understand :
 And yet would ye contend with learned men,
 And captious quarrels raise at what they pen ?
 'Tis far below us to contend with you,
 We therefore bid you and your cause adieu.

Complainers.

Well, since ye have pulled off the mask, we see
 What kind of men—whose ministers you be.
 We thought you had been Protestant divines,
 But now your colour thro' the cov'ring shines.
 You prove yourselves a Jesuitic crew ;
 Your very words confirm our judgment true.
 If we cannot the scriptures understand,
 Why do you solemn vows of us demand,
 At ev'ry time when children you baptize,
 And lay upon us strict and solemn ties
 To train them up according to God's word,
 And what the standards of the church afford ?
 Yet would you now all laymen wholly brand,
 That none of them can scripture understand ?

But tho' you brand us all for ignorance,
 We know it is your common cant pretence :
 You'd rather wish we understood much less,
 That you more easily might us oppress.
 This is a Popish maxim, well you know,
 To keep the laity in knowledge low ;
 For if they know too much, you fear they'll see
 Too much into your priestly jugglery.

You say, 'Tis far below you to contend
 With such as us ; you will not condescend
 To treat with us in plain familiar way—
 You will not hear whate'er we have to say.
 And now since patronage is made our yoke,
 Few of you care a farthing for the flock.
 If you can get the fleece, few of you care
 Howe'er the people wander, here or there.
 If you can live at ease, and dress you fine,
 And can with nobles, and with gentry dine,
 And there regale yourselves with punch and wine.

But herein we would not accuse you all,
 Though to the share of many this will fall.
 'Too many now like Eli's sons of old,
 Of whom we are in scripture plainly told,
 How they behav'd ; and now we also may
 See much the same, ev'n at the present day.
 And you have cause to tremble too, and fear,
 The Lord will not much longer with you bear.

General Assembly.

Refrain such false reproaches : we disdain
 To hear such speeches ; they are rude and vain.
 And what is this to purpose ? Pray be still ;
 What business have you with great M'Gill ?
 You know his cause adjusted was before,
 And what would you have us do in it more ?
 We cannot meddle now with this his cause,
 'Tis inconsistent with the church's laws.

Complainers.

If this a matter were of small import,
 We would not have brought it before this court.
 But as it is of such great magnitude,
 It ought to be most carefully review'd.

Were it a matter of a private case,
Respecting some peculiar time or place ;
Reason might then appear upon your side,
That you should shut your ears, and from it hide.

But as this case important is to all
The church and nation, both to great and small,
It doth for your cognizance strictly call.
But if you can reject so great a cause,
you act quite counter to the church's laws.
Yea, if you justify this glaring case,
The church at large you bring into disgrace :
For it implies a total revolution,
Of this whole church, and all her constitution.
No more an evangelic church she'll be,
But all Socinian to the last degree.
For many of our clergy now appear,
To that same side entirely to adhere.
And if her highest court espouse the same,
Then all is over ! To her endless shame !
None of her clergy need we more report
At either radical or higher court.
Whether they be Socinians, Greeks, or Jews,
If our head court all such complaints refuse.

General Assembly.

But what avails such arguments as these ?
We need not fear so dang'rous a disease.
Did not the synod chearfully declare,
That they were fully satisfied at AVR ?
The Doctor made so fair a recantation,
As might have satisfied both church and nation.
Why should we then stir up the strife again
And put ourselves to trouble, toil and pain ?
Therefore we will not meddle in this case,
To bring the man and Synod to disgrace.

Complainers.

Of what importance is this court at all,
If it refuse such causes to recal ?
It then becomes a court devoid of fame,
Regardless quite of honour, fear, or shame.
The fear of God is not before your eyes,
If such important cause you now despise.

The men who understand the healing art,
 Would never act such injudicious part :
 To let a limb, when mortified, remain
 Till all the means to save the life were vain.
 If so, they would be counted void of skill,
 Not to cut off that limb till it the patient kill.
 But you're for letting all be mortified,
 Rather than amputation should be tried.

And this is sure the very present case,
 you'll let the church die under black disgrace ;
 Rather than have one member now cut off,
 'Tho' all the world at you make sport and scoff.
 But if this member were cut off in time,
 It might have had effects the most sublime.
 you see its rotten at the very bone,
 And other means to save the church there's none.

you shun to bring the synod to disgrace,
 Which hath so madly acted in this case.
 And you refuse to stop this growing ill,
 Till the whole body of the church it kill.
 But can you stop the people's ears and eyes,
 Who see your actings, and your skill despise ?
 But you will bring yourselves to more disgrace
 By your proceedings in this present case,
 Than e'er the Synod or M'Gill have been,
 Since you regard not either shame or sin.
 you will despised be thro' ev'ry land ;
 The church of Rome will you Socinians brand :
 The church of England will you all despise,
 And say you favour nought but heresies.
 yea, all the churches on the continent,
 Whether they Popish be or Protestant ;
 All will despise you to the last degree ;
 yea, that is what you'll soon be made to see.

Nor is this all ; but far the smallest part,
 Consider him who sees your very heart.
 What ! tho' by force and fraud you gain the day,
 And banish Gospel Truths from you away,
 When Christ descends, at last, the Judge of all,
 And all mankind shall unto judgment call,

His friends shall ranked be on his right hand,
 And on his left his enemies shall stand :
 To whom these sentences shall then be giv'n,
 Come, ye my friends, and reign with me in heav'n :
 But those mine enemies, who me denied—
 Refus'd me for their King, and still relied
 On their own doings to be justified.

Your portion shall be everlasting woe,
 Therefore depart : from me for ever go !
 With your companions, and with devils take
 Your endless dwelling in th' infernal lake !

This certainly shall be the final case
 Of all who now reject the Gospel grace.
 This is no fiction hatch'd in Poets' brains,
 But what the Scripture of the Lord contains.
 Such are the Saviour's words, as all may see :
 " Those that believe in me shall saved be.
 But unbelievers ; all that can be nam'd,
 They shall, saith he, eternally be damn'd *."

Defenders.

Be not so rash with these fanatic strains,
 You are but for yourselves preparing chains :
 For whoso hates his brother he shall be
 Banish'd from God to all eternity.
 'This in the Scripture also you may find,
 If you to search it are at all inclin'd.
 You load this man with many calumnies,
 And urge against him many spiteful lies.
 Tho' he's a man of learning, sense, and skill,
 And surely he hath ne'er designed ill.
 The rev'rend Synod, when they met at AYR,
 Did in his favour almost all declare,
 And no protest, nor yet appeal was made
 Against him, when his cause was open laid ?

Complainers.

If we have spite, or bear the least ill will
 Against the person, who is call'd M^cGill :
 To him who knows our hearts we now appeal,
 We know he will our secrets all reveal,
 And sure he will no hidden guile conceal.

* Mark xvi. 16.

If we have not been zealous for his cause,
 And to defend his truth by righteous laws.
 Let him require it at our hands, and we
 Must suffer shame to all eternity.
 If we had any other end in view,
 Than to defend the truth, this is our due.
 'Tis not his person, but his errors base,
 That brings the church and nation to disgrace.
 This makes the ignorant his lies believe
 When they for truth his errors gross receive.

This we believe, no real Christian can
 Be ever satisfied with such a plan :
 To contradict the Gospel of our Lord,
 Which he and you have done with one accord.
 Who can be silent ? Who can e'er submit
 To such false doctrine hatch'd in hell's dark pit ?
 None but the sons of cursed Belial, who
 Regard not in which road to hell they go.
 Hath not M'Gill the Lord of life denied,
 And by his works a-fresh him crucified ?
 Christ's God-head he denies so flat and plain,
 And that he never could for men obtain
 Atonement for their sins : no, not at all,
 Nor for himself ; but all must stand or fall
 By their own doings, whether good or bad,
 Nor can salvation otherwise be had.
 This is his doctrine ; can it be believ'd ?
 If any do they're dreadfully deceiv'd !

Is this a doctor in divinity ?
 Then sure from hell had he his last degree !
 'Tis strange how any can his cause defend,
 Yet members of a Christian church pretend !
 'Twill certainly appear with reasons strong,
 To Satan's synagoge all such belong.

And though the Synod when convok'd at AYR,
 Did in his favour openly declare :
 Of this they are, or must ashamed be,
 Either in time, or to eternity.
 For they perfidiously the cause betray'd
 Of Christ their Lord, in what they did and said.
 And if in time they do not this repent,
 Well may they dread eternal punishment.

And our Assembly making this pretence,
 Were surely void of grace and common sense.
 And sure the Synod were themselves asham'd,
 For fear they should be at th' Assembly blam'd.
 And for that reason, many stay'd away,
 Which doth their cowardice at once betray.

But at Christ's judgment seat they must appear,
 Howe'er they may with trembling hearts draw near.
 If they in time be never brought to shame,
 It will not fare the better there with them.
 Like Judas, when his Master he betray'd,
 They in this case perfidiously have play'd.

And now, though they have published an act,
 To make the world believe, that they in fact
 Believe the doctrines of the Gospel true,
 Yet this, 'tis fear'd, is but the faith of few
 Of those who members of the Synod are,
 Or else their faith and works most widely jar.
 None ever need the Christian faith pretend,
 Who can the tenets of M'Gill defend.

Tho' Pontius Pilate he could wash his hands,
 Before the Jewish rulers, and their bands,
 And said that he was innocent and free
 Of that man's blood, whom he condemn'd to be
 Hang'd up, and crucified upon the tree.
 He own'd him innocent, yet him condemn'd,
 Because desir'd ; was he not to be blam'd ?
 And tho' he wash'd his hands when he had done,
 Could that for his atrocious guilt atone ?
 Just so the Synod ; will their act them free
 From their false judgment, and their perfidy ?
 For could they from M'Gill select the best,
 'Tis opposite to truth as east and west.
 So they may wash their hands, and say, that they
 Are from his errors clear ; they're wash'd away.
 But, tho' the ignorant are thus beguil'd,
 With Scripture this can ne'er be reconcil'd.
 If his gross errors can be justified,
 We must the Scriptures wholly lay aside.
 So if our church his doctrines will embrace,
 Let not the Bible in it more have place.

Yea, let us quite renounce the Christian name,
For, to that title we can lay no claim.

But let the nation in two parts divide,
One part, if any will, in Christ confide;
And let the other with M'Gill abide.
'Then diff'rent names they also ought to have,
According to which leader they will cleave.
Those who chuse Christ, let them be Christians still,
The other side be called by M'Gill.

But some sagacious eyes might here foresee
That these two parties never would agree
About the stipends, who should this enjoy;
This might create much trouble and annoy.
Th' incumbent clergy, they would surely claim,
And say the stipends must belong to them:
Because they were therein before install'd,
When to that parish they at first were call'd.
This party would (no doubt) the greatest be,
And most M'Gillites we may plainly see.

The Christians then might here reply again,
The former claim is forfeited most plain.
For this is evident, and all may see,
The stipend was for Christianity:
And all who do the Gospel plan renounce,
Their right they forfeit totally at once.

But here the other, to make good their claim
Would say, we no wise have renounc'd the name:
For we are Christians; yea, and more refin'd,
The other are but wild fanatics blind.

Thus might they wrangle to the last degree,
Until the legislature end the plea,
By taking their emoluments at once,
And let their merit be their only chance:
Until they saw to whom it best belong'd,
And neither party could be hereby wrong'd.
For had they e'er so much emolument,
Some of them would not be therewith content.
For patronage is such a great temptation,
It is the very ruin of this nation.
For, by this law, when once they get a place,
Shame dies with most, and they fear no disgrace.

Their stipends then is sure, do what they will,
 As we may plainly see by this M'Gill :
 And many more beside, as well as he,
 Altho' they have not shown so openly.
 If they believ'd that there's a future state,
 They never could behave at such a rate.
 But this is plain, and ev'ry man may see,
 They're Sadducees unto the last degree.

P O S T S C R I P T.

OUR clergy now, tho' far too much they have,
 For more emolument they loudly crave.
 Such is their spirit, avarice, and pride,
 Intoxicate them like a swelling tide.
 Such is their avarice, the more they have,
 The more insatiately for more they crave.
 May Heav'n illumine our legislature's eyes,
 To see thro' all their crafty fair disguise.
 For nothing can corrupt the clergy more,
 Than having too abundant worldly store.
 This makes them proud, and careless what they do ;
 Yea, ev'ry evil habit thence ensue :
 Especially when that's to them made sure,
 None can their pride and avarice endure.
 They lord it over God's inheritance—
 Live not by faith, but all by carnal sense.

If patronage and stipend were withdrawn,
 We might behold the Gospel's glorious dawn.
 But this we need not think will here take place,
 Until we some such prudent plan embrace.
 Let ev'ry congregation well support
 The pastor which they chuse of their own sort.
 While he is faithful, let them freely grant
 Him due supplies, for ev'ry sev'ral want.

None other method had they, Scripture says,
 For their support in the Apostles' days.
 And what tho' some of them were hard bestead ;
 Yea, many times were fain to work for bread,
 Because of persecution in their days,
 And also frequently by other ways.

Yet this is nowise like to be the case
 With us, while we sweet liberty embrace.
 All thanks to God, we liberty enjoy,
 And perfect peace without the least annoy.
 This rule might long our happiness procure,
 And make our peace and liberty endure.
 Let salary be raised by the seats,
 And this would put an end to all debates.
 The worthy clergy would sustain no loss,
 Nor ministers nor people this would cross.
 And in the country, where there's manse and glebe
 Let these be given still to Levi's tribe :
 And let none other stipend be their claim,
 But what should thus allotted be to them ;
 So long as they their function duly serv'd,
 And never from the path of duty swerv'd :
 Unless when sickness, or infirmity,
 Render'd them helpless, they excus'd should be.
 And when old age, or other sore distress,
 Makes them unfit for service more or less.
 They by a fund should then supported be,
 Which might be settled with propriety.
 Thus peace and happiness might long abide
 Were patronage and stipends laid aside :
 For these can only idle men support,
 And worthless clergy of the venal sort.
 But worthy clergymen would then be deem'd
 The best of mankind, and by all esteem'd.
 Preaching is grown a mercenary trade,
 And if some regulations be not made ;
 The churches may be turn'd to cotton mills,
 And let the clergy hunt upon the hills.
 In that same posture they might do more good,
 Than many of them who in pulpits stood.
 And for that sport they may their stipends crave,
 With as good grace as now they churches have.
 They'd have as many gentlemen to hear 'em,
 As in the church, where seldom they come near 'em.
 For from the church they've driv'n them away,
 Because they saw they served but for pay.
 They see their preachings are but empty sounds,
 Void of devotion as the cry of hounds.

Thus are the gentry from the churches wean'd,
 And preaching is by most of them disdain'd.
 Seeing the preachers are time-serving men,
 No wonder that they leave the churches then.
 If ministers behav'd but as they shou'd,
 The gentry soon would grow more wise and good ;
 But how can they believe them when they see
 Their preaching and their actions disagree ?
 They see the clergy are turn'd Sadducees,
 And can humbug the people as they please.
 Their craft is still the simple to deceive,
 By preaching what themselves nowise believe.

The clergy almost all seem fully bent,
 To bring about a very strange event,
 Namely, to banish Christianity,
 And introduce gross infidelity.
 But if the Lord would open all our eyes
 To see through all their falshood and disguise :
 And all the landed interest would consent,
 To lay before the British parliament,
 The fatal danger of the present times,
 And let them see some of our priestly crimes,
 And to revise some of our present laws,
 Which are become the chief procuring cause
 Of our disorders at this present day,
 And let the cause henceforth be done away.

Namely, let patronage and stipends be
 No more a burden on posterity.
 This would become a more conducive plan,
 Glory to bring to God, and good to man :
 According as was hinted at before,
 Let patronage and stipends be no more.
 Nor would the clergy losers be thereby,
 Whoe'er were worthy of that dignity :
 Only the base, the covetous and proud,
 These only would hereat exclaim aloud,
 Yea, Satan and his agents all would grieve,
 Because they could not then as now deceive,
 But all true honest men would hereby gain,
 And none but false designing men complain.

And further, to confirm this noble plan,
 This was the way the Gospel first began,

To be promulgated, the will of God,
 And thus th' Apostles they were sent abroad,
 To preach the Gospel freely far and near,
 As his most sacred records make appear.

On M'GILL's Recantation.

WHAT tho' M'Gill by sham recanted,
 That was but what the devil wanted,
 That he might better stand his ground,
 And give the church her deadly wound :
 Thus he stands better chance by far,
 To carry on th' infernal war :
 For had he obstinately stood,
 And not the least abatement shew'd ;
 He had then been depos'd at once,
 And never had another chance.
 But Satan taught him that sly trick,
 Just when he was upon the nick
 Of falling into cruel hands,
 So he obeyed his lord's commands.

This is the policy of hell,
 And this hath he performed well.
 When they cannot by strength prevail,
 By tricks like this they seldom fail.
 Then let his friends regard him still,
 Nor think the worse of their M'Gill ;
 For he hath wisely play'd his part,
 And pleas'd his master to the heart.
 And soon as he arrives in hell,
 The devils will reward him well.

T H E E N D.

